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IVANHOE

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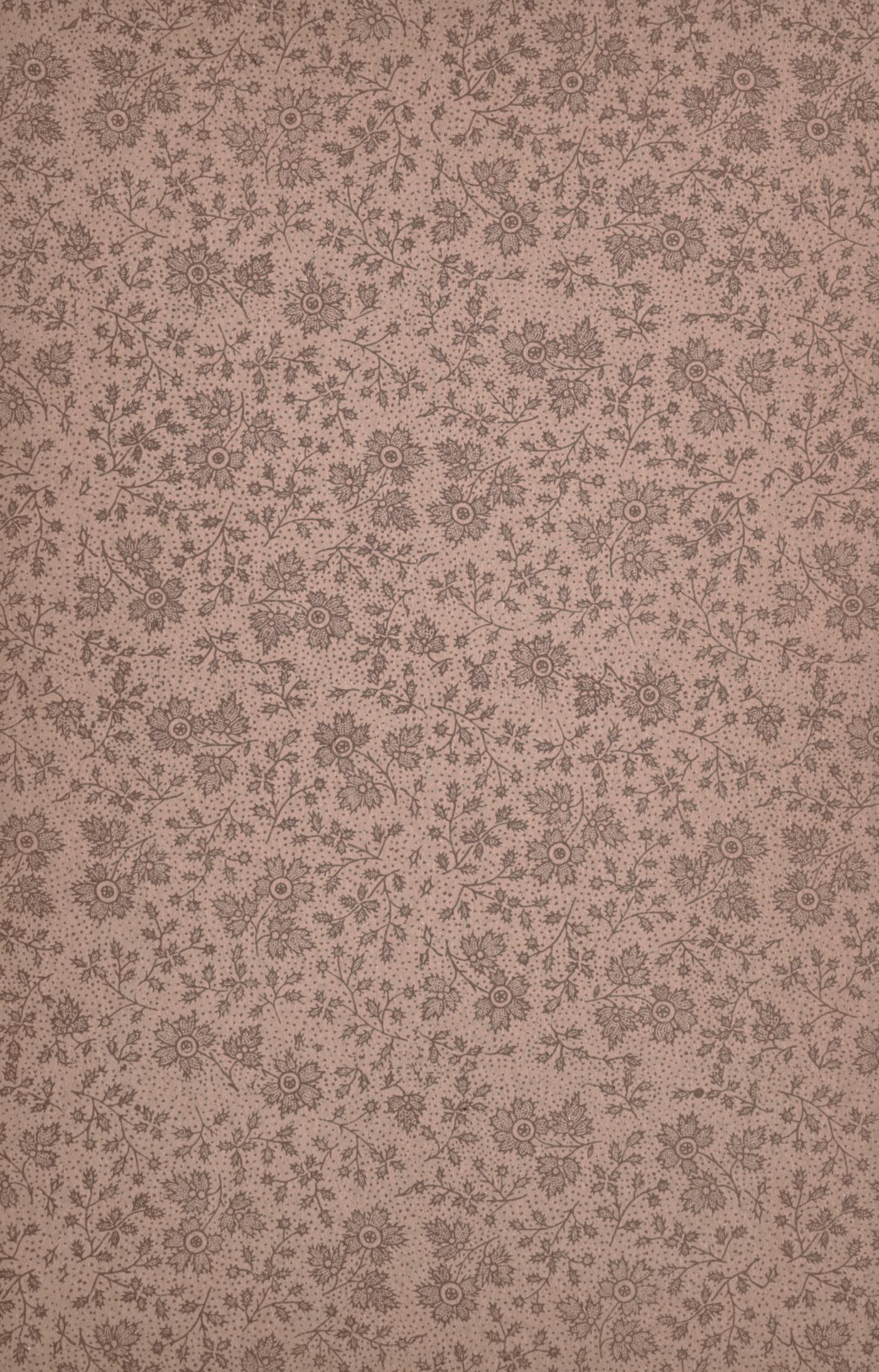


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"Ivanhoe was soon on foot, hastening to mend his fortune with the sword."—Page 98

IVANHOE

RETOLD

BY

SIR EDWARD
SULLIVAN,
BART.



• ILLUSTRATED •

NEW YORK

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As the Palmer was being guided to his chamber he was met by the waiting maid.—Page 9.

The title 'IVANHOE' is written in a large, stylized, blackletter font. To the left of the text is a decorative emblem featuring a shield with a cross and a sword resting on it.

IVANHOE

CHAPTER ONE.



At the time when King Richard, of the Lion Heart, was absent from his country, and a prisoner in the power of the perfidious and cruel Duke of Austria, there lived in England a high-born Saxon, named Cedric.

He was one of the few native princes who still continued to occupy the home of his fathers; but, like many more of the conquered English people, he had felt the tyranny and oppressive insolence of the haughty Norman Barons. He was a man of great personal strength, possessed of a hasty and choleric temper, but he had shrewdly refrained from showing any open hostility to the successors of the Conqueror; and so contrived to

maintain his ancient state in his mansion at Rotherwood, while many others in a similar situation had been compelled to give up their homes and properties to the supporters of the Norman invader.

He had an only son, Wilfred by name, with whom he had quarreled; and the young man, finding himself disinherited, had adopted the profession of a champion of the Cross, and sailed away to Palestine with the army of the Crusaders.

One evening, in the autumn of the year, Cedric was about to sit down to supper in the old hall at Rotherwood, when the blast of a horn was heard at his gate. In a few minutes after, a warder announced that the Prior Aymer, of Jorvaulx, and the good knight Brian de Bois-Guilbert, commander of the valiant order of Knights Templars, with a small retinue, requested hospitality and lodging for the night, being on their way to a tournament which was to be held not far from Ashby-de-la-Zouche.

“Normans both,” muttered Cedric; “but they are welcome to the hospitality of Rotherwood. Admit them.”

The noble guests were ushered in shortly after, accompanied by their attendants, and Cedric bade them welcome to his hall.

When the repast was about to begin, the steward, suddenly raising his wand, said aloud: “Forbear! Place for the Lady Rowena.” As he spoke a side-door at the upper end of the hall opened, and Rowena, the fair and stately ward of Cedric, followed by four female attendants, entered the apartment. All stood up to receive her, and, replying to their courtesy by a mute gesture of salutation, she moved gracefully forward to assume her place at the board, while the eyes of Brian de Bois-Guilbert seemed to be riveted by the striking beauty of her face.

As the banquet went on, conversation was interrupted by the entrance of a page, who an-

nounced that there was a stranger at the gate imploring admittance and hospitality.

“Admit him,” said Cedric, “be he who or what he may.”

The page retired; and returning shortly after, whispered into the ear of his master:

“It is a Jew, who calls himself Isaac of York.”

“St. Mary!” said the Abbot, crossing himself, “an unbelieving Jew, and admitted into this presence!”

“A dog Jew,” echoed the Templar, “to approach a defender of the Holy Sepulchre!”

“Peace, my worthy guests,” said Cedric; “my hospitality must not be bounded by your dislikes. Let him have a board and a morsel apart.”

Introduced with little ceremony, and advancing with fear and hesitation, and many a bow of deep humility, a tall thin old man, with an aquiline nose and piercing black eyes, approached the lower end of the board. Cedric nodded coldly in answer to his repeated salutations, and signed to

him to take a place at the lower end of the table, where, however, no one offered to make room for him.

A pilgrim, at length, who sat by the chimney, took compassion upon him, and resigned his seat, saying briefly, "Old man, my garments are dried, my hunger is appeased, thou art both wet and fasting." And, so saying, he placed some food before the Jew on the small table at which he had himself supped, and, without waiting for the old man's thanks, went to the other side of the hall.

As the feast proceeded, a discussion arose amongst the banqueters as to which knights had borne them best in Palestine among the champions of the Cross. De Bois-Guilbert seemed to speak slightingly of the English warriors, while giving the place of honour to the Knights of the Temple.

"The English chivalry was second to NONE," said the Pilgrim, who had listened to this conversation with marked impatience. "Second to NONE,

I say, who ever drew sword in defence of the Holy Land. I say, besides, for I saw it, that King Richard himself and five of his knights held a tournament after the taking of St. John-de-Acre, as challengers, and proved themselves superior to all comers."

The swarthy countenance of the Templar grew darker with a bitter scowl of rage as he listened to these words; but his angry confusion became only more marked as the Pilgrim went on to give the names of the English knights who had so distinguished themselves. He paused as he came to the name of the sixth.

"His name dwells not in my memory," he said, "but he was a young knight of lesser renown and lower rank."

"Sir Palmer," said Brian de Bois-Guilbert scornfully, "this assumed forgetfulness, after so much has been remembered, comes too late to serve your purpose. I will myself tell the name of the knight before whose lance I fell: it was the

Knight of Ivanhoe; nor was there one of the six that, for his years, had more renown in arms. Yet this will I say, and loudly, that, were he in England, I would gladly meet him in this week's tournament, mounted and armed as I now am."

"If Ivanhoe ever returns from Palestine I will be his surety that he meets you," replied the Palmer.

Not long after, the grace-cup was served round, and the guests, after making deep obeisance to their landlord and the Lady Rowena, arose, and retired with their attendants for the night.

As the Palmer was being guided to his chamber he was met by the waiting-maid of Rowena, who informed him that her mistress desired to speak with him.

A short passage and an ascent of some steps led him to the lady's apartment.

As the pilgrim entered she ordered her attendants, excepting only one, to retire.

“Pilgrim,” said the lady, after a moment’s pause, during which she seemed uncertain how to address him, “you this night mentioned a name—I mean the name of Ivanhoe—I would gladly hear news of him. Where and in what condition did you leave him?”

“I know little of the Knight of Ivanhoe,” answered the Palmer with a troubled voice. “He hath, I believe, surmounted the persecution of his enemies in Palestine, and is on the eve of returning to England.”

The Lady Rowena sighed deeply.

“Would to God,” she then said, “he were here safely arrived, and able to bear arms in the approaching tourney. Should Athelstane of Coningsburgh obtain the prize, Ivanhoe is like to hear evil tidings when he reaches England.”

Finding that there was no further information to be obtained about the knight, in whose fate she seemed to take so deep an interest, she bade her maidens to offer the sleeping-cup to the holy

man, and having presented him with a piece of gold, wished him good-night.

As the Palmer was being conducted to his room he inquired of his attendant where Isaac the Jew was sleeping, and learned that he occupied the room next to his own.

As soon as it was dawn the Pilgrim entered the small apartment where the Jew was still asleep. Stirring him with his pilgrim's staff, he told him that he should rise without delay, and leave the mansion. "When the Templar crossed the hall yesternight," he continued, "I heard him speak to his Mussulman slaves in the Saracen language, which I well understand, and he charged them to watch the journey of the Jew, to seize upon him when at a convenient distance from the mansion, and to conduct him to the castle of Philip de Malvoisin, or to that of Reginald Front-de-Boeuf."

It is impossible to describe the extremity of terror which seized upon the Jew at this information. He knew only too well of the relentless

persecution to which his kindred were subjected at this period, and how, upon the slightest and most unreasonable pretences, their persons and their property were exposed to every turn of popular fury.

He rose, accordingly, in haste.

It was not, however, such an easy matter to make their exit from the mansion. Gurth, the swineherd, a servant of much importance at that time, when appealed to to open the gate, refused to let the visitors out at such an unseasonable hour.

“Nevertheless,” said the Pilgrim, “you will not, I think, refuse *me* that favour.”

So saying, he whispered something in his ear in Saxon. Gurth started as if electrified, and hastened at once to procure their mules for the travellers, and to open the postern gate to let them out.

As the Pilgrim mounted, he reached his hand to Gurth, who kissed it with the utmost possible

veneration. The two travellers were soon lost under the boughs of the forest path.

They continued their journey at great speed; and the Jew noticed with amazement that the Palmer appeared to be familiar with every path and outlet of the wood. When they had travelled some distance from Rotherwood, and were approaching the town of Sheffield, the Jew expressed a wish to recompense the Palmer for the interest he had taken in his affairs.

“I desire no recompense,” answered his fellow traveller.

“Yet I can tell thee something thou lackest,” said Isaac, “and, it may be, supply it too. Thy wish even now is for a horse and armour.”

The Palmer started.

“What fiend prompted that guess?” said he.

“Under that Palmer’s gown,” replied the Jew, “is hidden a knight’s chain and spurs of gold. I saw them as you stooped over my bed this morning.”

Without waiting to hear his companion's reply, he wrote some words in Hebrew on a piece of paper, and handed it to the Pilgrim, saying:

“In the town of Leicester all men know the rich Jew, Kirjath Jairam of Lombardy; give him this scroll, and he will give thee everything that can furnish thee forth for the tournament; when it is over thou wilt return them safely. But hark thee, good youth, thrust thyself not too forward in this vain hurly-burly. I speak not for endangering the steel and coat of armour, but for the sake of thine own life and limbs.”

“Gramercy for thy caution,” said the Palmer, smiling; “I will use thy courtesy frankly—and it will go hard with me but I will requite it.”

They then parted, and took different roads for the town of Sheffield.

When the morning of the tournament arrived, the field of contest at Ashby-de-la-Zouche presented a brilliant and romantic scene. On the verge of a wood was an extensive meadow, of the



“We shall meet again, I trust,” said the defeated champion.—P. 22

finest and most beautiful green turf, surrounded on one side by the forest, and fringed on the other by straggling oak-trees. The ground, as if fashioned on purpose for the martial display which was intended, sloped gradually down on all sides to a level bottom, which was enclosed for the lists with strong palisades. At each end of the enclosure two heralds were stationed, and a strong body of men-at-arms, for maintaining order and ascertaining the quality of the knights who proposed to engage in the contest.

On a platform beyond the southern entrance were pitched five magnificent pavilions, adorned with pennons of russet and black—the chosen colours of the five knights challengers. That in the centre, as the place of honour, had been assigned to Brian de Bois-Guilbert, whose renown in all games of chivalry had occasioned him to be adopted as the chief and leader of the challengers. Outside the lists were galleries, spread with tapestry and carpets, for the convenience of the ladies

and nobles who were expected to attend the tournament. Another gallery raised higher than the rest, and opposite to the spot where the shock of combat was to take place, was decorated with much magnificence, and graced by a sort of throne and canopy, on which the royal arms were emblazoned. Squires, pages, and yeomen, in rich liveries, waited around the place of honour, which was designed for Prince John, the brother of the absent King, and his attendants. Opposite to this royal gallery was another, even more gaily decorated, reserved as the seat of honour for the Queen of Beauty and Love. But who was to fill the place on the present occasion no one was prepared to guess.

Gradually the galleries became filled with knights, nobles and ladies, while the lower space was crowded with yeomen and burghers.

Amongst the latter was Isaac the Jew, richly and magnificently dressed, and accompanied by his daughter, the beautiful Rebecca, whose ex-

quisite form, shown to advantage by a becoming Eastern dress, did not escape the quick eye of the Prince himself, as he rode by at the head of his numerous and gaily-dressed train.

As the Prince assumed his throne, he gave signal to the heralds to proclaim the laws of the tournament, which were briefly as follows:

First: The five challengers were to undertake all comers.

Secondly: Any knight might select any antagonist for combat by touching his shield. If he did so with the reverse of his lance, the trial of skill was made with what were called the arms of courtesy, that is, with lances at whose extremity a piece of round flat board was fixed, so that no danger was encountered, save from the shock of the horses and riders. But if the shield was touched with the sharp end of the lance, the knights were to fight as in actual battle.

Thirdly: The knight whom the Prince should declare to be the victor was to receive as prize a

war-horse of exquisite beauty and matchless strength, and in addition to this reward, he should have the peculiar honour of naming the Queen of Love and Beauty.

When the proclamation was made the heralds retired, and through the open barriers five knights advanced slowly into the arena. Approaching the challengers, each touched slightly, and with the reverse of his lance, the shield of the antagonist to whom he wished to oppose himself, and then retreated to the extremity of the lists, where all remained drawn up in a line.

At the flourish of clarions and trumpets they started out against each other at full gallop; and such was the superior skill or good fortune of the challengers, that those opposed to Bois-Guilbert, Malvoisin, and Front-de-Boeuf rolled on the ground. The antagonist of Grantmesnil broke his spear; while the fifth knight alone maintained the honour of his party.

A second and third party of knights took the

field, and although they had various success, yet, upon the whole, the advantage decidedly remained with the challengers, not one of whom lost his seat.

A fourth combat followed; and here, too, the challengers came off victorious.

Prince John now began to talk of awarding the prize to Brian de Bois-Guilbert, who had proved himself to be the best of the Norman knights; but his attention, and that of the other spectators, was arrested by the sound of a solitary trumpet, which breathed a note of defiance from the northern end of the enclosure.

All eyes were turned to see the new champion, and no sooner were the barriers opened than he paced into the lists. His suit of armour was formed of steel, richly inlaid with gold, and the device on his shield was a young oak-tree pulled up by the roots, with the word "disinherited" inscribed upon it. Riding straight up to Brian de Bois-Guilbert, he struck with the sharp end of his

spear the shield of the victorious Norman until it rang again. All stood astonished at his presumption, but none more than the redoubted knight whom he had thus defied to mortal combat.

When the two champions stood opposed to each other at the two extremities of the lists the public expectation was strained to highest pitch.

The trumpets had no sooner given the signal than the combatants vanished from their posts with the speed of lightning, and closed in the centre of the lists with the shock of a thunderbolt. The lances burst into shivers, both the knights being almost unhorsed. Retiring to the extremity of the lists, each received a fresh lance from the attendants; and again, amidst a breathless silence, they sprung from their stations, and closed in the centre of the open space, with the same speed, the same dexterity, the same violence, but not the same equal fortune, as before.

The Norman's spear, striking the centre of

his antagonist's shield, went to shivers, and the Disinherited Knight reeled in his saddle. On the other hand, the unknown champion had aimed his spear's point at the helmet of his opponent. Fair and true he hit the Norman on the visor, and saddle, horse, and man rolled on the ground under a cloud of dust.

"We shall meet again, I trust," said the defeated champion, as he extricated himself from the stirrups and fallen steed.

"If we do not," said the Disinherited Knight, "the fault will not be mine. On foot or horseback, with spear, with axe, or with sword, I am alike ready to encounter thee."

Without alighting from his horse, the conqueror called for a bowl of wine, and, opening the beaver of his helmet, announced that he quaffed it "To all true English hearts, and to the confusion of foreign tyrants."

He then desired a herald to proclaim that he was willing to encounter the rest of the challen-

gers in the order in which they pleased to advance against him.

The gigantic *Front-de-Boeuf*, armed in sable armour, was the first who took the field. But he was soon defeated.

Sir Philip Malvoisin next advanced; and against him the stranger was equally successful. *De Grantmesnil* soon after avowed himself vanquished; and *Ralph de Vipont* summed up the list of the stranger's triumphs, being hurled to the ground with such force that he was borne senseless from the lists.

The acclamations of thousands applauded the award of the Prince, announcing that day's honours to the *Disinherited Knight*.

The marshal of the field now approached the victor, praying him to suffer his helmet to be unlaced, ere they conducted him to receive the prize of the day's tourney from the hands of Prince John. But the *Disinherited Knight*, with all courtesy, declined their request. The Prince him-

self made many inquiries of those in his company about the unknown stranger; but none could guess who he might be. Someone suggested that it might, perhaps, be King Richard himself; and John turned deadly pale as he heard the words, for he had been plotting to seize the throne during his brother's absence.

The victorious knight received his prize, speaking not a word in reply to the complimentary expressions of the Prince, which he only acknowledged with a low bow. Leaping into the saddle of the richly-accoutred steed which had been presented to him, he rode up to where the Lady Rowena was seated, and heedless of the many Norman beauties who graced the contest with their presence, gracefully sinking the point of his lance, he deposited the coronet which it supported at the feet of the fair Saxon. The trumpets instantly sounded, while the heralds proclaimed the Lady Rowena the Queen of Beauty and of Love for the ensuing day.

Soon after the vast multitude had retired from the deserted field and lights began to glimmer through the twilight, announcing the toil of the armourers, which was to continue through the whole night in order to repair or alter the suits of armour to be used again on the morrow.

The next dawned in unclouded splendor, and at ten o'clock the whole plain was crowded with horsemen, horsewomen and foot passengers, hastening to the tournament; and shortly after a grand flourish of trumpets announced the arrival of Prince John and his gorgeous retinue.

About the same time arrived Cedric the Saxon with the Lady Rowena. He had been accompanied on the previous day by another noble Saxon, Athelstane, Lord of Coningsburgh, a suitor for the hand of Rowena, and one who considered his union with that lady as a matter already fixed beyond doubt, by the assent of Cedric and her other friends. Rowena herself, however, had never given her consent to such an alliance; and

entertained but a poor opinion of her would-be lover, whose pretensions for her hand she had received with marked disdain. Her Saxon lover was not one of her party at the tourney on the second day. He had observed with displeasure that Rowena was selected by the victor on the preceding day as the object of that honour which it became his privilege to confer, and Athelstane, confident of his own strength and skill, had himself donned his armour with a determination to make his rival feel the weight of his battle-axe.



CHAPTER TWO.



The combat on the second day of the tournament was on a much more extended scale than that of the previous one; and when the signal for battle was given some fifty knights, at the same moment, charged wildly at each other in the lists. The champions encountered each other with the utmost fury, and with alternate success; the tide of battle seeming to flow now toward the southern, now toward the northern extremity of the lists as the one or the other party prevailed. The clang of the blows and the shouts of the combatants, mixed fearfully with the sound of the trumpets, and drowned the groans of those who fell, and lay rolling beneath the feet of the horses. The splendid armour of the knights was now defaced with dust and blood,

and gave way at every stroke of the sword and battle-axe; while the gay plumage, shorn from the crests, drifted upon the breeze like snowflakes.

In the thick of the press and turmoil of the fight Bois-Guilbert and the Disinherited Knight repeatedly endeavoured to single out each other, spurred by mutual animosity. Such, however, was the crowd and confusion that, during the earlier part of the conflict, their efforts to meet were unavailing. But when the field became thin, by the numbers on either side who had yielded themselves vanquished or had been rendered incapable of continuing the strife, the Templar and the unknown knight at length encountered, hand to hand, with all the fury that mortal animosity, joined to rivalry of honour, could inspire. Such was the skill of each in parrying and striking that the spectators broke forth into a unanimous and involuntary shout of delight and admiration.

But at this moment the party of the Disinherited Knight had the worst. Front-de-Bœuf and

Athelstane, having defeated those immediately opposed to them, were now free to come to the aid of their friend the Templar; and, turning their horses at the same moment, the two spurred against the Disinherited Knight.

This champion, exposed as he was to the furious assaults of three opponents, each of whom was almost a match for him single-handed, must now have soon been overpowered, when an unexpected incident changed the fortunes of the day.

Amongst the ranks of the Disinherited Knight was a champion in black armour, mounted on a black horse, whose shield bore no device of any kind. He had engaged with some few combatants, and had easily defeated them during the earlier stages of the contest, but seemed to take no further interest in the event of the fight, acting the part rather of a spectator than of a party in the tournament.

The moment, however, he saw his leader so hard bested he seemed to throw aside his apathy, and



“Come down, rash girl! I swear by earth, and sea, and sky, I will offer thee no offence.”—Page 50.

setting spurs to his horse he came to his assistance like a thunderbolt, exclaiming, in a voice like a trumpet-call, "Disinherited to the rescue!"

Under the fury of his first stroke, Front-de-Bœuf, horse and all, rolled stunned to the ground. He then turned his steed upon Athelstane, and, wrenching from the hand of the bulky Saxon the battle-axe which he wielded, bestowed him such a blow upon the crest, that the Lord of Coningsburgh also lay senseless on the field. Having achieved this double feat, he returned calmly to the extremity of the lists, leaving his leader to cope as best he could with Brian de Bois-Guilbert. This was no longer matter of so much difficulty as formerly. The Templar's horse had bled much, and gave way under the shock of the Disinherited Knight's charge. As Bois-Guilbert rolled on the field, his antagonist sprung from horseback, and was in the act of commanding his adversary to yield or die, when Prince John gave the signal that the conflict was at an end.

It being now the duty of the Prince to name the knight who had done best, he determined, although contrary to the advice of those about him, that the honour of the day remained with the Black Knight.

To the surprise of all present, however, the knight thus preferred was nowhere to be found. He had left the lists immediately when the conflict ceased, and had been observed by some spectators to move slowly down one of the forest glades. After he had been summoned twice by sound of trumpet, it became necessary to name another; and the Disinherited Knight was for the second time named champion of the day.

As the victor was led towards the throne of the Lady Rowena, it was observed that he tottered. Rowena was about to place the chaplet which she held in her hand upon the helmet of the champion who kneeled before her, when the marshals exclaimed, "It must not be thus, his head must be bare;" and at once removed his helmet. The fea-

tures which were exposed were those of a young man of twenty-five; but his countenance was as pale as death, and marked in one or two places with streaks of blood.

Rowena had no sooner beheld him than she uttered a faint shriek; but at once summoning up all her energies, she placed upon the drooping head of the victor the splendid chaplet which was the destined reward of the day.

The knight bent low, and kissed the hand of the lovely Sovereign by whom his valour had been rewarded; and then, sinking yet farther forward, lay prostrate at her feet.

There was a general consternation. Cedric, who had been struck mute by the sudden appearance of his banished son, now rushed forward, as if to separate him from Rowena. But this had been already accomplished by the marshals of the field, who, guessing the cause of Ivanhoe's swoon, had hastened to undo his armour, and found that

the head of a lance had penetrated his breast-plate and inflicted a wound in his side.

The name of Ivanhoe was no sooner pronounced than it flew from mouth to mouth throughout the vast assembly. It was not long ere it reached the circle of the Prince, whose brow darkened as he heard the news. He knew that Ivanhoe had been a close attendant on his brother King Richard in the Holy Land; and as such he looked upon him as his own enemy. He was about to give the signal for retiring from the lists, when a small billet was put into his hand. He broke the seal with apparent agitation, and read the words, "Take heed to yourself, for the devil is unchained."

He turned as pale as death; and taking two of his courtiers aside, he put the billet into their hands. "It means," he said in a faltering voice, "that my brother Richard has obtained his freedom."

"It is time, then," said Fitzurse, his confiden-

tial attendant, "to draw our party to a head, and prepare our forces to meet him."

In sullen ill-humour the Prince left the place of tournament to hold high festival at the Castle of Ashby; but it was more than his courtiers could do to rouse him from the overpowering gloom which seemed to agitate his mind throughout the evening. On the next day it was settled that the Prince and all those who were ready to support him should attend a meeting at York for the purpose of making general arrangements for placing the crown upon the head of the usurper, and ousting King Richard from his sovereign rights.

Meanwhile, Cedric the Saxon, when he saw his son drop down senseless in the lists at Ashby, had given orders, half in pity, half in anger, to his attendants to convey Ivanhoe to a place where his wound might be dressed as soon as the crowd had dispersed. The attendants were, however, anticipated in this good office. The crowd dispersed, indeed, but the knight was nowhere to be seen.

The only information which could be collected from the bystanders was, that he had been raised with care by certain well-attired grooms, and placed in a litter belonging to a lady among the spectators, in which he had immediately been transported out of the press.

● Cedric and his friends, having seen the last of the tournament and the festivities which followed it, now set out on their return to Rotherwood. Their way lay through a thickly-wooded country, which was at the time held to be dangerous to travellers from the number of outlaws whom oppression and poverty had driven to despair, and who occupied the forests in large bands. From these rovers, however, Cedric and Athelstane accounted themselves secure, as they had in attendance ten servants. They knew, besides, that the outlaws were chiefly peasants and yeomen of Saxon descent, and were generally supposed to respect the persons and property of their countrymen.

As the travellers journeyed on their way, they

were alarmed by repeated cries for assistance; and when they rode up to the place from whence they came, they were surprised to find a horse-litter placed upon the ground, beside which sat a young woman, richly dressed in the Jewish fashion, while an old man, whose yellow cap proclaimed him to belong to the same nation, walked up and down, wringing his hands, as if effected by some strange disaster.

It was some time before Isaac of York, for it was he, could explain the nature of his trouble. When at length he began to come to himself out of his agony of terror, he said that he had hired a bodyguard of six men at Ashby, together with mules for carrying the litter of a sick friend; but that they all had fled away from him, having heard that there was a strong band of outlaws lying in wait in the woods before them. When he implored permission to continue his journey under the protection of Cedric and his party, Athelstane was strongly opposed to allowing the "dog

of a Jew," as he called him, to travel in their company. The Lady Rowena, however, had at the same time been approached by the old man's daughter, who, kissing the hem of her garment, implored her to have compassion on them. "It is not for myself that I pray this favour," said Rebecca; "nor is it even for that poor old man; but it is in the name of one dear to many, and dear even to you, that I beseech you to let this sick person be transported with care and tenderness under your protection."

So noble and solemn was the air with which Rebecca made this appeal, that on the intercession of Rowena Cedric readily consented to allow the Jew and his daughter, together with their sick friend, to attach themselves to his party.

Twilight was already coming on as the company proceeded on their journey. The path upon which the party travelled was now so narrow as not to admit above two riders abreast. They accordingly quickened their pace, in order to get as

rapidly as possible out of the dangerous neighbourhood which they were traversing. They had just crossed a brook, whose banks were broken, swampy, and overgrown with dwarf willows, when they were assailed in front, flank and rear by a large body of men in the dress of outlaws, and with an impetuosity to which, in their confused and ill-prepared condition, it was impossible to offer effectual resistance. Both the Saxon chiefs were made prisoners at the same moment, while the attendants, embarrassed with baggage, surprised and terrified at the fate of their masters, fell an easy prey to the assailants; and the Lady Rowena, the Jew and his daughter experienced the same misfortune. Wamba, the jester, alone escaped, showing upon the occasion much more courage than those who pretended to greater sense. As he wandered through the forest, a dog, which he recognised, jumped up and fawned upon him, and Gurth, the swineherd, shortly after made his appearance. He was horrified to

hear from his fellow-servant of the misfortune which had befallen their master and his party; and the two were about to hasten away for the purpose of procuring aid, when a third person suddenly appeared, and commanded them both to halt. Notwithstanding the twilight, and although his dress and arms showed him to be an outlaw, Wamba recognised him to be Locksley, the yeoman, a man who had carried off the prize for archery at the tournament a day or two before.

“What is the meaning of all this,” he said; “or who is it that rifle and ransom and make prisoners in these forests?”

The yeoman then left, bidding Gurth and Wamba, on the peril of their lives, not to stir until he returned. He was not long away, and on returning said that he had found out who the attacking party were and whither they were bound.

“Cedric the Saxon,” he said, “the friend of the rights of Englishmen, shall not want English

hands to help him in this extremity. Come, then, with me, until I gather more aid."

So saying, he walked through the wood at a great pace, followed by the jester and the swineherd.

It was after three hours' good walking that the servants of Cedric, with their mysterious guide, arrived at a small opening in the forest. Beneath an enormous oak-tree several yeomen lay stretched on the ground, while another, as sentinel, walked to and fro in the moonlight shade. Locksley, on being recognised, was welcomed with every token of respect and attachment; and he at once gave orders to collect what force they could.

"A set of gallants," he said, "who have been masquerading in such guise as our own, are carrying a band of prisoners to Torquilstone, the castle of Front-de-Bœuf. Our honour is concerned to punish them, and we will find means to do so."

In the meantime Cedric and the other prisoners

had been hurried along by Bois-Guilbert and De Bracy, and safely lodged in the strong and ancient castle of Reginald Front-de-Bœuf. Once within the castle, the prisoners were separated. Cedric and Athelstane were confined in one apartment, the Lady Rowena in another, while the poor Jew was hastily thrust into a dungeon-vault, the floor of which was deep beneath the level of the ground, and his daughter Rebecca was locked into a cell in a distant and sequestered turret.

The dungeon occupied by Isaac of York was dark and damp. Chains and shackles, which had been the portion of former captives, hung rusted on the gloomy walls, and in the rings of one of those sets of fetters there remained the mouldering bones of some unhappy prisoner who had been left to perish there in other days. At one end of this ghastly apartment was a large fire-grate, over the top of which were stretched some transverse bars of iron, half devoured with rust.

For nearly three hours the wretched Jew re-

mained sitting in a corner of his dungeon, when steps were heard on the stair by which it was approached. The bolts were withdrawn, the hinges creaked as the wicket opened, and Reginald Front-de-Bœuf, followed by two Saracen slaves of the Templar, entered the prison.

“Most cursed dog of an accursed race!” he said to Isaac, “see’st thou these scales? In these shalt thou weigh me out a thousand silver pounds.”

“Holy Abraham!” returned the Jew, “heard man ever such a demand? Not within the walls of York, ransack my house and that of all my tribe, wilt thou find the tithe of that huge sum of silver.”

“Prepare then,” said the Norman, “for a long and lingering death.”

And he ordered the slave to make ready the fire.

“See’st thou, Isaac,” he said, “the range of bars above that glowing charcoal? On that warm couch shalt thou lie, stripped of thy clothes. One of these slaves shall maintain the fire beneath thee,

while another shall anoint thy wretched limbs with oil, lest the roast should burn. Now, choose between such a scorching bed and the payment of a thousand pounds of silver; for, by the head of my father, thou hast no other option."

"So may Abraham, Jacob, and all the fathers of our people assist me," said Isaac; "I cannot make the choice, because I have not the means of satisfying your exorbitant demand."

"Seize him, and strip him, slaves!" said the Knight, "and let the fathers of his race assist him if they can."

The assistants stepped forward, and laying hands on the unfortunate man, waited the hard-hearted Baron's further signal.

The unhappy Jew eyed their savage countenances and that of Front de-Bœuf, in hope of discovering some symptoms of relenting; and as he looked again at the glowing furnace his resolution at length gave way.

"I will pay!" he said. "That is," he added, after

a moment's pause, "I will pay it with the help of my brethren. Let my daughter Rebecca go forth to York, and she will bring the treasure here."

"Thy daughter!" said Front-de-Bœuf, as if surprised. By heavens! Isaac, I would I had known of this: I gave the black-browed girl to be a handmaiden to Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert, to do as it might please him with her. My word is passed to my comrade in arms; nor would I break it for ten Jews and Jewesses to boot."

The yell which Isaac raised at this unfeeling communication made the vault ring.

"Robber and villain!" he exclaimed, "I will pay thee nothing—not one silver penny will I pay thee—unless my daughter is delivered to me in safety and honour. Do thy worst. Take my life if thou wilt, and say the Jew, amidst his tortures, knew how to disappoint the Christian."

"Strip him, slaves! and chain him down upon the bars," said Front-de-Bœuf.

The Saracens, in obedience to this savage order,

had already torn from the feeble and straggling old man his upper garment, and were proceeding totally to disrobe him, when the sound of a bugle, twice winded without the castle, penetrated even to the recesses of the dungeon; and immediately after, loud voices were heard calling for Sir Reginald Front-de-Bœuf. Unwilling to be found engaged in his hellish occupation, the savage Baron gave the slaves the signal to restore Isaac's garment, and hastily quitted the dungeon with his attendants.

During the time the unhappy Jew was undergoing his terrible ordeal in the gloomy dungeon, his daughter Rebecca, in her lonely turret, had been exposed to attentions no less unpleasant.

On being left in the secluded cell, she found herself in the presence of an old hag, who kept murmuring to herself a Saxon rhyme, as if to beat time to the spindle at which she was engaged. As soon as they were alone the old woman addressed the Jewess, telling her that she was once



As he approached the castle gate, he was at once admitted.—P. 52.

as young and fair as herself, when Front-de-Bœuf, the father of the man who now lorded it in the castle, attacked the place and slew her father and his seven sons, and she became the prey and scorn of the conqueror.

“Is there no help? Are there no means of escape?” said Rebecca. “Richly, richly would I requite thine aid.”

“Think not of it,” said the hag, “from hence there is no escape but through the gates of death; and it is late, late,” she added, shaking her gray head, “ere these open to us. Fare thee well, Jewess!—thou hast to do with them that have neither scruple nor pity.” And so saying she left the room, locking the door behind her.

Before long a step was heard on the stair, and the door of the turret-chamber slowly opened, and Brian de Bois-Guilbert entered the room. He commenced to address the Jewess with flattering speeches, saying that he loved her, and that she must now be his. But Rebecca rejected his prof-

ferred love with scorn, protesting that she would proclaim his villainy from one end of Europe to the other. "At least," she said, "those who tremble not at thy crime will hold thee accursed for having so far dishonoured the cross thou wearest as to follow a daughter of my people."

"Thou art keen-witted, Jewess," replied the Templar, well aware of the truth of what she spoke; "but loud must be thy voice of complaint, if it is heard beyond the iron walls of this castle. One thing only can save thee, Rebecca. Submit to thy fate, embrace our religion, and thou shalt go forth in such state that many a Norman lady shall envy thee thy lot."

"Submit to my fate!" said Rebecca, "and, sacred Heaven! to what fate? Embrace thy religion, and what religion can it be that harbours such a villain? Craven knight! forsworn priest! I spit at thee and I defy thee. The God of Abraham's promise hath opened an escape to His daughter, even from this abyss of infamy!"

As she spoke she threw open the latticed window, and in an instant after stood on the very verge of the parapet outside, with not the slightest screen between her and the tremendous depth below. Unprepared for such a desperate effort, Bois-Guilbert had time neither to intercept nor to stop her. As he offered to advance, she exclaimed, "Remain where thou art, proud Templar, or at thy choice advance! One foot nearer, and I plunge myself from the precipice; my body shall be crushed out of the very form of humanity upon the stones below ere it become the victim of thy brutality!"

The Templar hesitated, and a resolution which would have never yielded to pity or distress gave way to his admiration for her fortitude. "Come down," he said, "rash girl! I swear by earth, and sea, and sky, I will offer thee no offence. Many a law, many a commandment have I broken. but my word never."

"Thus far," said Rebecca, "I will trust thee;"

and she descended from the verge of the battlement, but remained standing close by one of the embrasures. "Here," she said, "I take my stand. If thou shalt attempt to diminish by one step the distance now between us, thou shalt see that the Jewish maiden will rather trust her soul with God than her honour to the Templar."

As she spoke, the bugle was heard to sound, announcing that the presence of the Knight was required in another part of the castle; and as he instantly obeyed the summons, Rebecca found herself once more alone.

When the Templar reached the hall of the castle, he found De Bracy there already. They were soon after joined by Front-de-Bœuf.

"Let us see the cause of this cursed clamour," said Front-de-Bœuf. "Here is a letter, and if I mistake not, it is in Saxon."

The Templar took the paper from his hand and read it. It was a demand to surrender the prisoners within one hour, failing which the castle

would be instantly besieged; and it was signed at the end by Wamba and Gurth, by the Black Knight and Locksley.

The answer which was returned from the castle to this missive announced that the prisoners would not be given up; but that permission would be given to a man of religion to come to receive their dying confession, as it had been determined to execute them before noon.

When this reply was brought back to the party of the Black Knight, a hurried consultation was held as to what they should do. There being no churchman amongst them, and no one else seemed willing to undertake the risk of trusting himself within the castle, Wamba, the jester, was selected for the office. He was soon muffled in his religious disguise; and imitating the solemn and stately deportment of a friar, he departed to execute his mission.

As he approached the castle gate, he was at once admitted, and shortly after ushered into the

apartment where Cedric and Athelstane were confined; and the three were left alone. It was not long before Cedric recognised the voice of his jester. The faithful servant at once suggested that his master should change garments with him and so make his escape. But it required the strong pressure of both Wamba and Athelstane before Cedric would consent. At length he yielded, and the exchange of dress was accomplished. He left the apartment saying that he would rescue his friends, or return and die along with them.

In a low-arched and dusty passage by which Cedric endeavoured to work his way to the hall, he was met by Urfried, the old crone of the tower.

“Come this way, father,” she said to him; “thou art a stranger, and canst not leave the castle without a guide. Come hither, for I would speak with thee.”

So saying, she proceeded to conduct the unwilling Cedric into a small apartment, the door of

which she heedfully secured. ‘Thou art a Saxon, father,’ she said to him; ‘the sounds of my native language are sweet to mine ears, though seldom heard for many years.’”

She then told him the story of her unhappy and degraded life, and how she was once the daughter of the noble thane of Torquilstone.

“Thou the daughter of Torquil Wolfgang!” said Cedric; “thou—thou, the daughter of my father’s friend and companion in arms!”

“Thy father’s friend!” echoed Urfriend; “then Cedric, called the Saxon, stands before me. But why this religious dress?”

“It matters not who I am,” said Cedric; “proceed, unhappy woman, unhappy Ulrica, I should say, for thou canst be none other, with thy tale of horror and guilt. Wretched woman!” he exclaimed, as she concluded her miserable history, “so thou hast lived, when all believed thee murdered; hast lived to merit our hate and execration;

lived to unite thyself with the vile tyrant who slew thy nearest and dearest!"

"I hated him with all my soul," replied Ulrica; "I also have had my hours of vengeance; I have fomented the quarrels of our foes; I have seen their blood flow, and heard their dying groans; I have seen my oppressor fall at his own board by the hand of his son. Yet here I dwell, till age, premature age, has stamped its ghastly features on my countenance, scorned and insulted where I was once obeyed. Thou art the first I have seen for twenty years by whom God was feared or man regarded; and dost thou bid me despair?"

"I bid thee repent," said Cedric; "but I cannot, I will not, longer abide with thee."

"Stay yet a moment!" said Ulrica. "Revenge henceforth shall possess me wholly, and thou thyself shalt say that, whatever was the life of Ulrica, her death well became the daughter of the noble Torquil. Hasten to lead your forces to the attack, and when thou shalt see a red flag wave

from the eastern turret, press the Normans hard; they will have enough to do within. Begone, I pray thee; follow thine own fate, and leave me to mine."

As she spoke she vanished through a private door, and Front-de-Bœuf entered the apartment.

"Thy penitents, father," he said, "have made a long shrift; but come, follow me through this passage, that I may dismiss thee by the postern."

As Cedric was leaving the castle, the Norman gave him a note to carry to Philip de Malvoisin, begging him to send assistance with all the speed he could. He promised the friar a large reward for doing the errand, and as they parted at the postern door he thrust into Cedric's reluctant hand a piece of gold, adding, "Remember, I will flay off thy cowl and skin if thou failest in thy purpose."

When Front-de-Bœuf rejoined his friends and found out the trick which had been played upon him, and that Cedric had escaped, his rage was

unbounded, and it was only on De Bracy interceding for him that he consented to spare the life of the poor jester.

Before long the inmates of the castle had other things to occupy them. The enemy was announced to be under their very walls; and each knight repaired hastily to his post, and at the head of the few followers whom they were able to muster they awaited with calm determination the threatened assault.

When at length the attack upon the castle was commenced all was at once bustle and clamour within its gloomy walls. The heavy step of men-at-arms traversed the battlements, or resounded on the narrow and winding passages and stairs which led to the various bartizans and points of defense. The voices of the knights were heard animating their followers, or directing means of defence; while their commands were often drowned in the clashing of armour or the clamorous shouts of those whom they addressed. The

shrill bugle without was answered by a flourish of Norman trumpets from the battlements, while the cries of both parties augmented the fearful din. Showers of well-directed arrows came pouring against each embrasure and opening in the parapets, as well as every window where a defender might be suspected to be stationed; and these were answered by a furious discharge of whizzing shafts and missiles from the walls.

And so for some time the fight went on; many combatants falling on either side. But soon the conflict became even more desperate when the Black Knight, at the head of a body of his followers, led an attack upon the outer barrier of the barbican. Down came the piles and palisades before their irresistible onslaught; but their headlong rush through the broken barriers was met by Front-de-Bœuf himself and a number of the defenders.

The two leaders came face to face, and fought hand to hand on the breach amid the roar of their

followers who watched the progress of the strife. Hot and fierce was the combat that ensued between them; but ere many minutes had passed the giant form of Front-de-Bœuf tottered like an oak under the steel of the woodman, and dropped to the ground. His followers rushed forward to where he lay, and their united force compelling the Black Knight to pause, they dragged their wounded leader within the walls.

An interval of quiet now succeeded, the besiegers remaining in possession of the outer defences of the castle, and the besieged retiring for the time within the walls of the fortress.

During the confusion which reigned amongst the followers of Front-de-Bœuf when the attack had commenced, Rebecca had been allowed to take the place of the old crone, Ulrica, who was in close attendance on the wounded man who had been brought into the castle in company with Isaac of York and the other captives. The sufferer was Ivanhoe himself, who had so mysteri-

ously disappeared on the conclusion of the tournament, when his father, Cedric, had sent his servants to attend him to a place of safety. The gallant young warrior, who, as he fell fainting to the ground, seemed to be abandoned by all the world, had been transported from the lists at the entreaty of Rebecca, to the house at Ashby then occupied by Isaac of York, where his wounds were dressed and tended by the Jewish maiden herself. So great was her skill and knowledge of medicine, that she undertook to restore the injured knight to health in eight days' time; but she informed him of the necessity they were under of removing to York, and of her father's resolution to transport him thither, and tend him in his own house until his wound should be healed. It was on their journey to that town that they were overtaken on the road by Cedric and his party, in whose company they were afterwards carried captive to the Castle of Torquilstone.

But to return to the assault. When Front-de-

Bœuf, deeply wounded, was rescued by his followers from the fury of the Black Knight, he was conveyed to his chamber. As he lay upon his bed, racked with pain and mental agony, and filled with the fear of rapidly approaching death, he heard a voice address him.

“Think on thy sins,” it said, “Reginald Front-de-Bœuf; on rebellion, on rapine, on murder.”

“Who is there? What art thou?” he exclaimed in terror. “Depart, and haunt my couch no more; let me die in peace.”

“In peace thou shalt NOT die,” repeated the voice; “even in death shalt thou think on the groans which this castle has echoed, on the blood that is engrained in its floors.”

“Go, leave me, fiend!” replied the wounded Norman. “Leave me and seek the Saxon witch, Ulrica, who was my temptress; let her, as well as I, taste the tortures which anticipate hell.”

“She already tastes them,” said Ulrica, stepping before the couch of Front-de-Bœuf; “she

hath long drunken of this cup, and its bitterness is now sweetened to see that thou dost partake it.”

“Detestable fury!” exclaimed the Norman. “Ho! Giles, Clement, Eustace, seize this witch, and hurl her from the battlements; she has betrayed us to the Saxon.”

“Call on them again, valiant Baron,” said the hag, with a smile of grisly mockery; “but know, mighty chief, thou shalt have neither answer nor aid. Listen to these horrid sounds,” for the din of the recommenced assault and defence now rung fearfully loud from the battlements of the castle; “in that war-cry is the downfall of thy house. And know, too, even now, the doom which all thy power and strength is unable to avoid, though it is prepared for thee by this feeble hand. Markest thou the smouldering and suffocating vapour which already eddies in sable folds through the chamber? Rememberest thou the magazine of fuel that is stored beneath these apartments?”

“Woman!” exclaimed the wounded man with fury, “thou hast not set fire to it? By heaven thou hast, and the castle is in flames!”

“They are fast rising, at least,” said Ulrica; “and a signal shall soon wave to warn the besiegers to press hard upon those who would extinguish them. Farewell, Front-de-Bœuf; farewell for ever.”

So saying, she left the apartment; and Front-de-Bœuf could hear the crash of the ponderous key, as she locked and double-locked the door behind her.

Meanwhile, the Black Knight had led his forces again to the attack; and so vigorous was their assault, that before long the gate of the castle alone separated them from those within. At this moment the besiegers caught sight of the red flag upon the tower which Ulrica had described to Cedric; and, as she had bade them do, the assailants at once redoubled their efforts to break in the postern gate.

The defenders, finding the castle to be on fire, now determined to sell their lives as dearly as they could; and, headed by DeBracy, they threw open the gate, and were at once involved in a terrific conflict with those outside. The Black Knight, with portentous strength, forced his way inward in despite of De Bracy and his followers. Two of the foremost instantly fell, and the rest gave way, notwithstanding all their leaders' efforts to stop them. The Black Knight was soon engaged in desperate combat with the Norman Chief, and the vaulted roof of the hall rung with their furious blows. At length De Bracy fell.

“Yield thee, De Bracy,” said the Black Champion, stooping over him, and holding against the bars of his helmet the fatal poniard with which the knights dispatched their enemies. “Yield thee, rescue or no rescue, or thou art but a dead man.”

“I will not yield,” replied the Norman faintly,

to an unknown conqueror. Tell me thy name, or work thy pleasure on me."

The Black Knight whispered something into the ear of the vanquished.

"I yield me to be true prisoner, rescue or no rescue," then answered De Bracy, in a tone of sullen submission.

"Go to the barbican," said the victor in a tone of authority, "and wait there my further orders."

"Yet first let me say," said DeBracy, "what it imports thee to know. Wilfred of Ivanhoe is wounded and a prisoner, and will perish in the burning castle without present help."

"Wilfred of Ivanhoe!" exclaimed the Black Knight—"prisoner and perish! The life of every man in the castle shall answer it if a hair of his head be singed. Show me his chamber!"

When the Black Knight reached the room, Ivanhoe was alone. Rebecca, who had remained with him until a few minutes before, had just been carried off forcibly by Bois-Guilbert. Rais-

ing the wounded man with ease, the Black Knight rushed with him to the postern gate, and having there delivered his burden to the care of two yeomen, he again entered the castle to assist in the rescue of the other prisoners.

One turret was now in bright flames, which flashed out furiously from window and shot-hole. But in other parts the besiegers pursued the defenders of the castle from chamber to chamber, and satiated in their blood the vengeance which had long animated them against the soldiers of the tyrant, Front-de-Bœuf. Most of the garrison resisted to the uttermost; few of them asked quarter, none received it.

As the fire commenced to spread rapidly through all parts of the castle, Ulrica appeared on one of the turrets. Her long dishevelled gray hair flew back from her uncovered head, while the delight of gratified vengeance contended in her eyes with the fire of insanity. Before long the towering flames had surmounted every obstruc-

tion, and rose to the evening skies one huge and burning beacon, seen far and wide through the adjacent country; tower after tower crashed down, with blazing roof and rafter. The vanquished, of whom very few remained, scattered and escaped into the neighboring wood. The maniac figure of Ulrica was for a long time visible on the lofty stand she had chosen, tossing her arms abroad with wild exultation. At length, with a terrific crash, the whole turret gave way, and she perished in the flames which had consumed her tyrant.

When day dawned the outlaws and their rescued prisoners assembled around the trysting-tree in the oak forest, beside the now ruined castle. Two only of Front-de-Bœuf's captives were missing: Athelstane and the Jewish maiden, the former being reported as amongst the slain, and Rebecca having been carried off by Bois-Guilbert before her friends could effect her rescue.

When the outlaws had divided the spoils which

they had taken from the Castle of Torquilstone, Cedric prepared to take his departure. He left the gallant band of foresters sorrowing deeply for his lost friend, the Lord of Coningsburgh; and he and his followers had scarce departed, when a procession moved slowly from under the greenwood branches in the direction which he had taken, in the centre of which was the car in which the body of Athelstane was laid.

When the funeral train had passed out of sight, Locksley addressed the Black Knight, and asked him if he had any request to make, as his reward for the gallantry he had displayed.

“I accept the offer,” said the knight; “and I ask permission to dispose of Sir Maurice de Bracy at my own pleasure.”

“He is already thine,” said Locksley, “and well for him!”

“De Bracy,” said the knight, “thou art free; depart. He whose prisoner thou art scorns to take mean revenge for what is past. But beware

of the future, lest a worse thing befall thee. Maurice de Bracy, I say, BEWARE!" De Bracy bowed low and in silence, threw himself upon a horse, and galloped off through the wood.

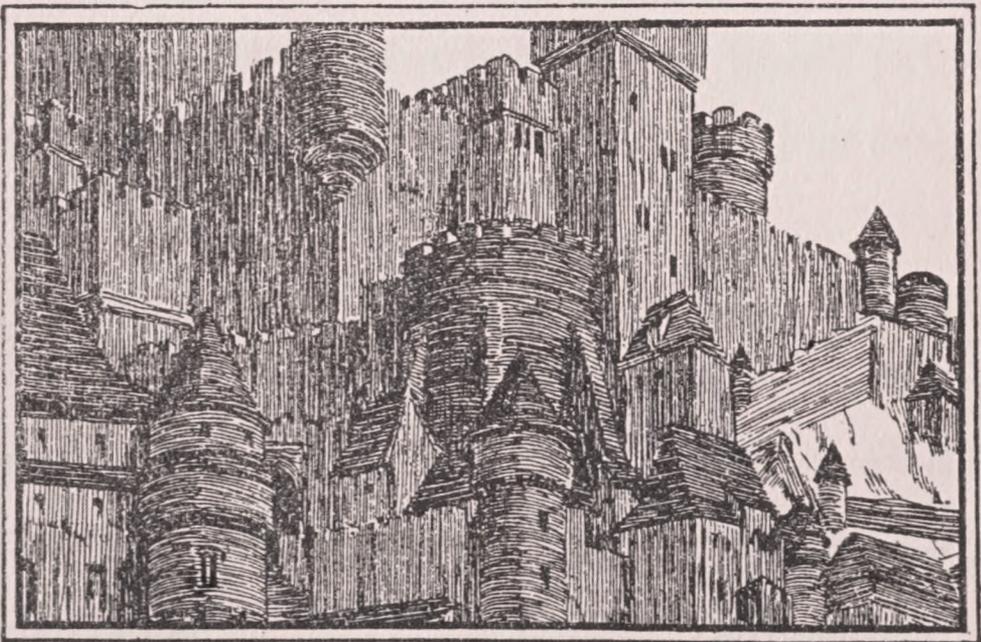
"Noble knight," then said Locksley, "I would fain beg your acceptance of another gift. Here is a bugle, which an English yeoman has once worn; I pray you to keep it as a memorial of your gallant bearing. If ye should chance to be hard bested in any forest between Trent and Tees, wind three notes upon it, and ye shall find helpers and rescue."

"Gramercy for the gift, bold yeoman," said the knight; "and better help than thine and thy rangers would I never seek, were it at my utmost need."

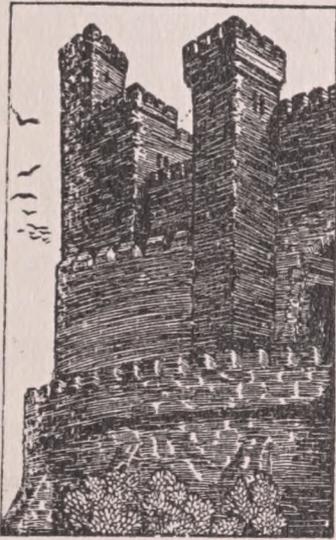
So saying, he mounted his strong war-horse, and rode off through the forest.

During all this time Isaac of York sat mournfully apart, grieving for the loss of his dearly-loved daughter Rebecca. He was assured that

she was still alive, but that there was no hope of rescuing her from the clutches of Bois-Guilbert, except by the payment of a ransom of six hundred crowns. On consenting to pay this amount to the Prior of Jorvaulx, who had just then joined the party in the wood, the Jew was given a letter, written by the Prior himself, directed to Bois-Guilbert at the Preceptory of Templestowe, whither the maiden had been carried off, commanding that Rebecca should be set at liberty. And with this epistle the unhappy old man set out to procure his daughter's liberation.



CHAPTER THREE.



Meanwhile there was brave feasting in the Castle of York to which Prince John had invited those nobles, prelates, and leaders by whose assistance he hoped to carry through his ambitious projects upon his brother's throne. Deep was the Prince's disappointment when he learnt of the fall of Torquilstone, and the defeat of the knights who failed to defend it, and on whose support he strongly relied. The rumoured intelligence had scarcely reached him, when De Bracy was ushered into his presence, his armour still bearing the marks of the late fray, and covered with clay and dust from crest to spur.

“The Templar is fled,” said De Bracy, in answer to the Prince's eager questions; “Front-de-

Bœuf you will never see more; and," he added in a low and emphatic tone, "Richard is in England; I have seen him and spoken with him."

Prince John turned pale, tottered, and caught at the back of an oaken bench to support himself.

On awakening from the stupor into which he had been thrown by the unexpected intelligence, he determined to endeavour to seize his brother, and hold him a prisoner. He appealed to De Bracy to assist him in this project, and became at once deeply suspicious of the knight's loyalty towards him when he declined to lift hand against the man who had spared his own life.

Driven almost to desperation, and with bitter complaints against those who had promised to support him, John now treacherously directed Waldemar Fitzurse, one of his most intimate attendants, to depart at once, with a chosen band of followers, for the purpose of overtaking King Richard and, if possible, securing him as a prisoner.

In the meantime, Isaac of York, though suffering much from the ill-treatment he had received at Torquilstone, made his way to the Preceptory of Templestowe, for the purpose of negotiating his daughter's redemption. Before reaching his destination he was told that Lucas de Beaumanoir, the Grand Master of the Order of the Templars, was then on visit to the Preceptory. He had come, the Jew was informed, for the purpose of correcting and punishing many of the members of the body whose conduct had of late been open to severe censure; and he was recognised besides as the most tyrannical oppressor of the Jewish people.

In spite of this ominous intelligence, Isaac pursued his way, and on arriving at Templestowe was at once shown into the presence of the Grand Master himself. With fear and trembling he produced the letter of the Prior of Jorvaulx to Bois-Guilbert. Beaumanoir tore open the seal and perused the letter in haste, with an expression



“Go, leave me, fiend!” replied the wounded woman.—Page 61.

of surprise and horror. He had not until then been informed of the presence of the Jewish maiden in the abode of the Templars, and great was his fury and indignation on learning that she was amongst them. He denounced Rebecca as a witch, by whose enchantment Bois-Guilbert had been led to offend against the rules of the Holy Order, and in tones of passion and scorn he refused to listen to Isaac's protestations of her innocence.

"Spurn this Jew from the gate," he said to one of his attendants, "and shoot him dead if he oppose or turn again. With his daughter we will deal as the Christian law and our own high office warrant."

Poor Isaac was hurried off accordingly, and expelled from the Preceptory, all his entreaties, and even his offers, unheard and disregarded. He had hitherto feared for his daughter's honour; he was now to tremble for her life.

Orders were at once given by the Grand Mas-

ter to prepare the great hall of the Preceptory for the trial of Rebecca as a sorceress; and even the president of the establishment did not hesitate to aid in procuring false evidence against the unfortunate Jewess, for the purpose of ingratiating himself with Beaumanoir, from whom he had kept secret the presence of Rebecca in the holy precincts.

When the ponderous castle bell had tolled the point of noon, the Jewess was led from her secluded chamber into the great hall in which the Grand Master had for the time established his court of justice. As she passed through the crowd of squires and yeomen, who already filled the lower end of the vast apartment, a scrap of paper was thrust into her hand, which she received almost unconsciously, and continued to hold without examining its contents. The assurance that she possessed some friend in this awful assembly gave her courage to look around, and to mark into whose presence she had been conducted. She

gazed accordingly upon a scene which might well have struck terror into a bolder heart than hers.

On an elevated seat at the upper end of the great hall, directly before the accused, sat the Grand Master of the Temple, in full and ample robes of flowing white, holding in his hand the mystic staff, which bore the symbol of the Order. At his feet was placed a table, occupied by two scribes, whose duty it was to record the proceedings of the day. Their chairs were black, and formed a marked contrast to the warlike appearance of the knights who attended the solemn gathering. The preceptors, of whom there were four present, occupied seats behind their superiors; and behind them stood the esquires of the Order, robed in white.

The whole assembly wore an aspect of the most profound gravity—the reflection, as it were, of the sombre countenance of the austere and relentless Grand Master. The lower part of the hall was filled with guards and others whom curi-

osity had drawn together to witness the important and impressive ceremony.

The Grand Master himself, in a short speech, announced the charge against the Jewess; and, on its conclusion, several witnesses were called to prove the risks to which Bois-Guilbert exposed himself in endeavouring to save Rebecca from the blazing castle; while other witnesses testified to the apparent madness of the Templar in bringing the Jewess to the Preceptory. A poor Saxon peasant was next dragged forward to the bar, who had been cured of a palsy by the accused. Most unwilling was his testimony, and given with many tears; but he admitted that two years since he had been unable to stir from his bed until the remedies applied by Rebecca's directions had in some degree restored the use of his limbs. With a trembling hand he produced from his bosom a small box of ointment, bearing some Hebrew characters upon the lid, which was, with most of

the audience, a sure proof that the devil had stood apothecary.

Witnesses skilled in medicine were then brought forward to prove that they knew nothing of the materials of which the unguent was compounded, and who suggested that it must have been manufactured by means both unlawful and magical. Other witnesses came forward to prove that Rebecca's cures were accomplished by means of mutterings in an unknown tongue, and songs of a sweet, strange sound, which made the ears of the hearer tingle and his heart throb, adding that her garments were of a strange and mystic form, and that she had rings impressed with cabalistic devices, all which were, in those ignorant and superstitious times, easily credited as proofs of guilt.

On the conclusion of this weighty evidence the Grand Master in a solemn tone demanded of Rebecca what she had to say against the sentence of condemnation which he was about to pronounce.

“To invoke your pity,” said the lovely Jewess, with a voice somewhat tremulous with emotion, “would, I am aware, be as useless as I should hold it mean. To state that to relieve the sick and wounded of another religion cannot be displeasing to God were also unavailing; to plead that many things which these men (whom may Heaven pardon!) have spoken against me are impossible would avail me but little, since you believe in their possibility, and still less would it advantage me to explain that the peculiarities of my dress, language, and manners are those of my people. I am friendless, defenceless, and the prisoner of my accuser there. He is of your own faith; his lightest word would weigh down the most solemn protestations of the distressed Jewess, and yet to himself, yes, Brian de Bois-Guilbert, to thyself I appeal, whether these accusations are not false?”

There was a pause; all eyes turned to the Templar. He was silent.

“Speak,” she said, “if thou art a man; if thou art a Christian, speak! I conjure thee, by the habit which thou dost wear, by the name thou dost inherit, by the honour of thy mother, I conjure thee to say, are these things true?”

“Answer her, brother,” said the Grand Master.

“The scroll, the scroll!” was all that Bois-Guilbert uttered in reply, looking to Rebecca.

The Jewess instantly remembered the slip of paper which she continued to hold in her hand, and, looking at it without being observed, she read the words, “*Demand a champion!*”

“Rebecca,” said the Grand Master, who believed the words of Bois-Guilbert had reference to some other writing, “hast thou aught else to say?”

“There is yet once chance of life left to me,” said the Jewess, “even by your own fierce laws. I deny this charge; I maintain my innocence. I challenge the privilege of trial by combat, and

will appear by my champion. There lies my gage."

She took her embroidered glove from her hand and flung it down before the Grand Master, with an air of mingled simplicity and dignity which excited universal surprise and admiration.

A short consultation then took place between Beaumanoir and the preceptors, in which it was decided that Brian de Bois-Guilbert was the fittest knight to do battle for the Holy Order. To him, accordingly, the glove of Rebecca was handed; and the Jewess was commanded to find a champion by the third day following. It was further intimated to her that should she fail to do so, or if her champion should be discomforted, she should die the death of a sorceress, according to doom.

Being granted permission to communicate with her father, she hastily wrote a few lines in Hebrew to him, imploring him to seek out Wilfred, the son of Cedric, and let him know that she was

in sore need of a champion. As it fortunèd, the messenger who did her errand had not far to go before he met Isaac of York.

The poor old man, on learning his daughter's terrible condition, was quite overcome; but, cheered in some measure by the kindly words of a Rabbi who was with him, he determined, weak and feverish though he was, to make a last effort for the child he loved so dearly. And having said farewell the two Jews parted, Isaac to seek out Ivanhoe, and the Rabbi to go to York to look for other assistance.

In the twilight of the day of her trial, if it could be called a trial, a low knock was heard at the door of Rebecca's prison-chamber; and shortly after Brian de Bois-Guilbert entered the apartment.

She drew back in terror at the sight of the man who had been the cause of all her misfortunes; but he bade her not to be afraid. He had come, he said, to tell her that he was prepared to refuse to

do battle for the Templars against her, and sacrifice his name and honour as a member of the Holy Order, and that he would leave the preceptory, appear in three days in disguise, and himself be her champion against any knight who should confront him, on one condition: that she should accept him as a lover.

Rebecca listened to his words, and then with scorn refused his offer.

“So be it then, proud damsel,” said Bois-Guilbert; “thou hast thyself decided thine own fate. I shall appear in the lists against thy champion, and know that there lives not the knight who may cope with me alone save Richard Cœur-de-Lion and his minion Ivanhoe. Ivanhoe, as thou well knowest, is unable to bear his corslet, and Richard is in a foreign prison. Farewell.” And so saying the Templar left the apartment.

Pending this time, so full of terror and anxiety for poor Rebecca, the Back Knight, having left the company of the generous outlaw, held his way

to a neighbouring religious house to which the wounded Ivanhoe had been removed when the castle was taken. Here he remained for the night; and the following day he set out for Coningsburgh to attend the obsequies of the deceased Athelstane, Wamba alone being his companion.

They had ridden together for some distance when the quick eye of the jester caught sight of some men in armour concealed in a brake not far from where they were.

Almost immediately after three arrows were discharged from the suspected spot, one of which glanced off the visor of the Black Knight.

“Let us close with them,” said the knight, and he rode straight to the thicket. He was met by six or seven men-at-arms, who ran against him with their lances at full career. Three of the weapons struck against him, and splintered with as little effect as if they had been driven against a tower of steel. The attacking party then drew their swords and assailed him on every side. But

many as they were to one they had met their match; and a man reeled and fell at every blow delivered by the Black Knight. His opponents, desperate as they were, now bore back from his deadly blows, and it seemed as if the terror of his single strength was about to gain the battle against such odds when a knight in blue armour, who had kept himself behind the other assailants, spurred forward with his lance, and taking aim, not at the rider but at the steed, wounded the noble animal mortally.

“That was a felon stroke!” exclaimed the Black Knight, as the horse fell to the earth, bearing his rider along with him.

At this moment Wamba winded the outlaw’s bugle, which he had been given to carry. The sudden sound made the murderers bear back once more, and Wamba did not hesitate to rush in and assist his knight to rise.

“Shame on ye, false cowards!” exclaimed he in

the blue harness; "do ye fly from the empty blast of a horn blown by a jester?"

Animated by his words, they attacked the Black Knight anew, whose best refuge was now to place his back against an oak, and defend himself with his sword. The felon knight, who had taken another spear, watching the moment when his formidable antagonist was most closely pressed, galloped against him in hopes to nail him with his lance against the tree; but Wamba, springing forward in good time, checked the fatal career of the Blue Knight, by hamstringing his horse with a stroke of his sword; and horse and man went heavily to the ground. Almost immediately after, a band of yeomen, headed by Locksley, broke forth from the glade, who, joining manfully in the fray, soon disposed of the ruffians, all of whom lay on the spot dead, or mortally wounded.

The visor of the Blue Knight, who still lay entangled under his wounded steed, was now

opened and the features of Waldemar Fitzurse were disclosed.

“Stand back, my masters,” said the Black Knight to those about him; “I would speak with this man alone. And now, Waldemar Fitzurse, say me the truth: confess who set thee on this traitorous deed?”

“Richard,” answered the fallen knight, “it was thy father’s son.”

Richard’s eyes sparkled with indignation, but his better nature overcame it. “Take thy life unasked,” he said; “but, on this condition, that in three days thou shalt leave England, and that thou wilt never mention the name of John of Anjou as connected with thy felony.” Then, turning to where the yeomen stood apart, he said, “Let this knight have a steed, Locksley, and let him depart unharmed. Thou bearest an English heart, and must needs obey me. I am Richard of England!”

At these words the yeomen kneeled down be-

fore him, tendering their allegiance, while they implored pardon for their offences.

“Rise, my friends,” said Richard. “Your misdemeanours have been atoned by the loyal services you rendered my distressed subjects before the walls of Torquilstone, and the rescue you have this day afforded your sovereign. Arise, my liegemen, and be good subjects in future. And thou, brave Locksley—”

“Call me no longer Locksley, my liege,” said the outlaw; “I am Robin Hood of Sherwood Forest.”

Before many more minutes had gone a sylvan repast was hastily prepared beneath a huge oak-tree for the King of England. Amongst those who partook of the forest hospitality of the outlaws were Ivanhoe and Gurth, who just then came on the scene, the former now all but cured of his wound, thanks to the healing balsam with which he had been provided by Rebecca the Jewess.

When the feast was concluded, the King, attended by Ivanhoe, Wamba, and Gurth, proceeded on his way to Coningsburgh. As the travellers approached the ancient Saxon fortress, they could see the huge black banner floating from the top of the tower, which announced that the obsequies of the late owner were still in the act of being solemnized. All around the castle was a scene of busy commotion, the whole countryside being gathered from far and near to partake of the funeral banquet. Cooks and mendicants, strolling soldiers from Palestine, pedlars, mechanics, wandering palmers, hedge-priests, Saxon minstrels and Welsh bards, together with jesters and jugglers, formed a motley and hungry gathering, such as could only be seen on the occasion of which now brought them together; and through this riotous crowd Richard and his followers with difficulty made their way.

As they entered the apartment where Cedric sat, Ivanhoe muffled his face in his mantle. Upon

the entrance of Richard, the Saxon arose gravely to bid him welcome. Having greeted him and his friends with the mournful ceremony suited to the occasion, he conducted the party to the small and rude chapel which formed part of the castle, where, before an altar, was placed a bier, round which kneeled three priests, who told their beads and muttered their prayers with the greatest signs of external devotion. On leaving the chamber of death, Cedric led his knightly guest to another apartment, where he was about to leave him, when the Black Knight took his hand.

“I crave to remind you, noble Thane,” he said, “that when we last parted you promised to grant me a boon.”

“It is granted ere named, noble knight,” said Cedric, still unaware that he was speaking to the king.

“Know me, then, from henceforth,” said the Black Knight, “as Richard Plantagenet; the boon I crave is that thou wilt forgive and receive

to thy paternal affection this good knight here, Wilfred of Ivanhoe.”

“And this is Wilfred!” said Cedric, pointing to his son.

“My father! my father!” said Ivanhoe, prostrating himself at Cedric’s feet, “grant me thy forgiveness!”

“Thou hast it, my son,” said Cedric, raising him up. But he had scarce uttered the words when the door flew open, and Athelstane, arrayed in the garments of the grave, stood before them, pale, haggard, and like something arisen from the dead.

The effect of this apparition on the persons present was utterly appalling. Cedric started back in amazement. Ivanhoe crossed himself, repeating prayers in Saxon, Latin, and Norman-French, while Richard alternately said “*Benedicite*,” and swore, “*Mort de ma vie*”

The mystery was, however, soon explained, and by Athelstane himself. The blow, he told

them, by which it was supposed he had been slain, had only stunned him. When he recovered his senses, he found himself in an open coffin in the church of St. Edmund's, his arms swathed down, his feet tied fast, and darkness all about him. He sneezed and groaned, and would have arisen, when the sacristan and Abbot, full of terror, came running in, and would have persuaded him he was in purgatory, had he not known the voice of one of them.

They then gave him a sleeping-draught, and as he woke again he could hear them droning out death psalms for the repose of his soul. After some time, he found himself alone with the sacristan, and being made aware that his custodian had been indulging too freely in wine, he had leaped out of the coffin, rushed through the door of the vault, which had luckily been left unlocked, fought his way through two venerable brethren who were regaling themselves in an outer apartment, and, having mounted a palfrey which he

found in the stable, galloped to his own castle with all the speed he could—man and mother's son flying before him as from a spectre all along the way.

Having concluded his story, still breathless after his mad ride, he denounced the treacherous Abbot and all his monks, who were determined to persuade everyone that he was still dead, in order to secure the vast legacy which they knew was coming to them; and swore that he would not rest content until the Abbot's fat carcass, in his cope and stole, was hanging from the top of the Castle of Coningsburgh.

He had caught sight of Ivanhoe as he first came into the apartment, but had lost sight of him owing to the crowd of eager listeners by which the room was now thronged. Filled with a spirit of generosity to his rival, and thirsting only for vengeance against the plotting monks, he took the hand of Rowena, who stood beside him, and was about to place it in that of Ivanhoe,

when it was found that Wilfred had vanished from the room.

It was at length discovered that a Jew had been to seek the knight, and that, after a very brief conference, he had called for Gurth and his armour, and had left the castle. King Richard was also gone, and no one knew whither.

Meanwhile, the tiltyard of the Preceptory of Templestowe was prepared for the combat which should decide the life or death of Rebecca. As the hour approached which was to determine the fate of the unfortunate Jewess, a vast multitude had gathered to witness a spectacle even in that age but seldom seen.

At one end of the lists arose the throne of the Grand Master, surrounded with seats for the preceptors and the knights of the Order, over which floated the sacred standard of the Templars.

At the opposite end was a pile of faggots, so arranged around a stake, deeply fixed in the ground, as to leave a space for the victim whom

they were destined to consume. Close by stood four black slaves, whose colour and African features, then so little known in England, appalled the multitude, who gazed on them as demons.

Soon the slow and sullen sounds of the great church bell chilled with awe the hearts of the assembled crowd; and before long the Grand Master, preceded by a stately retinue, approached his throne. Behind him came Brian de Bois-Guilbert, armed cap-a-pie in bright armour, but looking ghastly pale. A long procession followed, and next a guard of warders on foot, in sable livery, amidst whom might be seen the pale form of the accused maiden. All her ornaments had been removed, and a coarse white dress, of the simplest form, had been substituted for her Oriental garments; yet there was such an exquisite mixture of courage and resignation in her look that even in this garb, and with no other ornament than her long black tresses, each eye wept that looked upon her.

The unfortunate Jewess was conducted to a black chair placed near the pile; and soon after a loud and long flourish of trumpets announced that the court was seated for judgment.

There was a dead pause for many minutes.

“No champion appears for the appellant,” said the Grand Master.

Another pause succeeded; and then the knights whispered to each other that it was time to declare the pledge of Rebecca forfeited. At this instant a knight, urging his horse to speed, appeared on the plain advancing towards the lists. A hundred voices exclaimed, “A champion! a champion!” and amidst a ringing cheer the knight rode into the tiltyard, although his horse appeared to reel from fatigue.

To the summons of the herald, who demanded his rank, his name, and purpose, the stranger answered, raising his helmet as he spoke, “I am Wilfred of Ivanhoe.”

“I will not fight with thee at present,” said Bois-Guilbert. “Get thy wounds healed.”

“Ha! proud Templar,” said Ivanhoe, “hast thou forgotten that twice didst thou fall before this lance? I will proclaim thee a coward in every court in Europe unless thou do battle without farther delay.”

“Dog of a Saxon!” said the Templar, “take thy lance, and prepare for the death thou hast drawn upon thee!”

At once each champion took his place, the trumpets sounded, and the knights charged each other in full career. The wearied horse of Ivanhoe, and its no less exhausted rider, went down, as all had expected, before the well-aimed lance and vigorous steed of the Templar. But although the spear of Ivanhoe did but touch the shield of Bois-Guilbert, that champion, to the astonishment of all who beheld it, reeled in his saddle, lost his stirrups, and fell in the lists.

Ivanhoe was soon on foot, hastening to mend

his fortune with his sword; but his antagonist arose not. Wilfred, placing his foot on his breast, and the sword's point to his throat, commanded him to yield him, or die on the spot. Bois-Guilbert returned no answer.

“Slay him not, Sir Knight,” cried the Grand Master. “We allow him vanquished.”

He descended into the lists, and commanded them to unhelm the conquered champion. His eyes were closed; the dark red flush was still on his brow. As they looked on him in astonishment the eyes opened, but they were fixed and glazed. The flush passed from his brow, and gave way to the pallid hue of death. Unscathed by the lance of his enemy, he had died a victim to the violence of his own contending passions.

“This is indeed the judgment of God,” said the Grand Master, looking upwards; “thy will be done!”

Turning then to Wilfred of Ivanhoe, he said, “I pronounce the maiden free and guiltless. The

arms and the body of the deceased knight are at the will of the victor."

His further speech was interrupted by a clattering of horses' feet, and the Black Knight, followed by a numerous band of men-at-arms, galloped into the lists.

At a glance he saw how matters stood. "Bohun," he said, addressing one of his attendant knights, do thine office."

The officer stepped forward and, laying his hand on the shoulder of Albert de Malvoisin, said, "I arrest thee of high treason."

"Who dares arrest a Knight of the Temple in my presence?" said the Grand Master; "and by whose authority is this bold outrage offered?"

"By my authority," said the King, raising his visor, "and by the order of Richard Plantagenet who stands before you."

While he spoke the royal standard of England was seen to float over the towers of the preceptory instead of the Temple banner; and before long

the followers of the King were in complete possession of the entire castle.

Meanwhile Rebecca, giddy and almost senseless at the rapid change of circumstances, was locked in the arms of her aged father; and shortly after the two retreated hurriedly from the lists.

Not many days passed before the nuptials of Wilfred and the fair Rowena were celebrated in the noble minster of York, attended by the King in person.

On the second morning after this happy bridal Rebecca was shown into the apartment of the Lady of Ivanhoe. She had come, she said, to pay the debt of gratitude which she owed to Wilfred, and to ask his wife to transmit to him her grateful farewell. She prayed that God might bless their union, and, as she rose to leave, she handed Rowena a casket filled with most precious jewels. "Accept them, lady," she said; "to me they are valueless; I will never wear jewels more. My father and I, we are going to a far country where

at least we shall dwell in liberty. He to whom I dedicate my future life will be my Comforter if I do His will. Say this to thy lord should he chance to inquire after the fate of her whose life he saved." She then hastened to bid Rowena adieu, and glided from the apartment.

Wilfred lived long and happily with his bride, for they were attached to each other by the bonds of early affection, and they loved each other the more from the recollection of the obstacles which had so long impeded their union.



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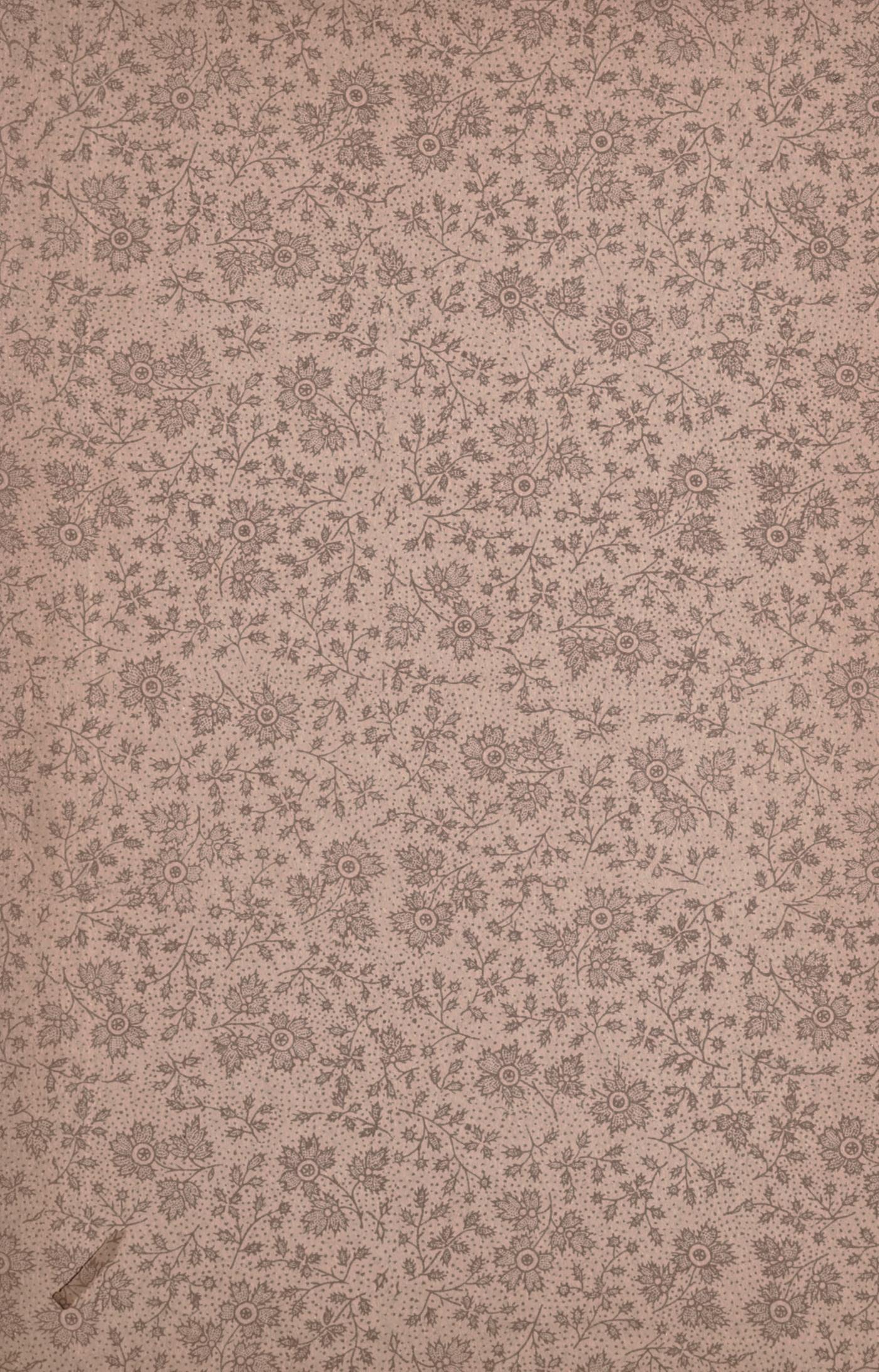
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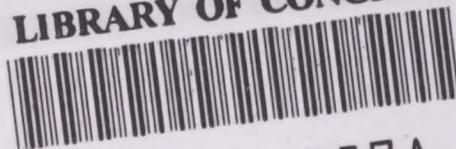
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